

22 March 1966

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

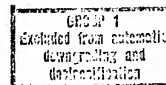
1. Major Brown of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF called on the secure telephone and requested estimates of the tons carried on the Hanoi-Dong Dang and the Hanoi-Lao Cai railroad lines of North Vietnam during 1964 and 1965. He said that these estimates were desired by the Secretary of the Air Force.

2. I explained to Major Brown the difficulty of providing estimates of this type. For example, we know that in 1964 the total railroad system carried about 4.1 million tons, but there is no solid evidence of the breakdown of this tonnage by individual railroad lines. This allocation can be made only by weighting the traffic on the various lines by economic activity and estimates of the movement of economic and military traffic. No data at all are available from the North Vietnamese on the total tons carried by the railroad during 1965. Our best estimate is that, in spite of the bombing, tons carried held up very well and amounted to about 3.7 million tons or about 10 percent less than in 1964. Measured in ton kilometers, however, the traffic moved was probably considerably below 1964.

3. With this caveat, I provided Major Brown with the following estimates:

	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>
Total Metric Tons Carried	4,100,000	3,700,000
Tons Carried on the Hanoi-Lao Cai line	1,230,000	800,000
Percent of Total	30	21.5
Tons Carried on the Hanoi-Dong Dang line	800,000	750,000
Percent of Total	20	20

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4. In addition, I cautioned Major Brown that he should not be misled by the estimated tonnages carried on these railroad lines, and conclude that the importance of the Hanoi-Lao Cai line is equal to or greater than the Hanoi-Dong Dang. I pointed out that the Hanoi-Dong Dang line is the principal land route for the import of economic and military goods from China and the USSR, and furnished him with the following estimates of import traffic on the Hanoi-Dong Dang line:

<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>
160,000 tons	310,000 tons

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